

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF
CHESTER-LE-STREET

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

TOGETHER WITH THE

Report of the Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE YEAR

1952

JOHN L. SIDDLE, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.



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COUNCIL CHAMBERS,

CHESTER-LE-STREET.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
CHESTER-LE-STREET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report for the year 1952 is much abbreviated owing to the death of Dr. Foster in the middle of 1953 at which time under normal circumstances the report would be beginning to take shape.

There is therefore little comment on the statistics which are presented in a similar form to the report for 1951 so that comparisons can be made fairly easily.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Members,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN L. SIDDLE,
Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health—

JOHN DOWNIE TRAIL M.B., Ch.B.(Abd.), D.P.H. (Abd.).

The Medical Officer of Health held the combined appointments of Chest Physician for the Newcastle-on-Tyne Regional Hospitals Board and that of part-time Medical Officer of Health for the Chester-le-Street Urban District Council.

Sanitary Inspector—

GEORGE C. BANKS, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

The Sanitary Inspector is a whole-time officer and holds the Sanitary Inspector's Certificate, the Meat and Other Food Inspector's Certificate, and the Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Public Works and Buildings of the Royal Sanitary Institute. The Diploma in Cattle, Meat and Food Inspection of the Liverpool University and also the Diploma of the Institute of Public Health and Hygiene. The Inspector also holds a certificate of the Royal Society of Arts (Common Law).

Housing and Shops Inspector—

GEORGE C. BANKS, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

The Ministry of Health contributes half the salaries of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector.

HIGHWAYS AND SANITARY (PUBLIC HEALTH) COMMITTEE 1952.

Coun. C. F. C. Lawson (Chairman).

Coun. N. Holyoake
Coun. J. Miller
Coun. R. Moist
Coun. E. Reeve, J.P.
Coun. J. Willis
Coun. T. Vivian
Coun. E. Fennell
Coun. J. McGorrigan

Coun. J. Powney
Coun. Miss E. E. Turnbull
Coun. C. Fenner
Coun. Mrs. E. I. Brighton, J.P.
Coun. T. D. Fuge
Coun. Mrs. N. A. Hearn
Coun. Mrs. D. H. Riddell
Coun. L. Usher J.P.

STATISTICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

The district has an area of 2,647 acres with a total population at mid-year 1952 of 18,140.

The number of inhabited houses at 31st March, 1953 was 5,521.

The actual product of the penny rate for the year ending 31st March, 1952 was £310 4s. 6d. and for the same period the rateable value was £83,321.

The number of inhabited houses at 31st March, 1953 was as follows :—

Terrace Houses	2,385
Detached Houses	139
Semi-detached	866
Farm Houses and Cottages	16
Houses and Shops combined	62
Council Houses	2,053
TOTAL	5,521

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Live Births : Legitimate	132	130	262
Illegitimate	5	6	11
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population			15.05
Still Births	3	2	5
Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still) Births			15.3
Deaths	125	102	227
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population			12.5

Deaths from Puerperal Causes

Puerperal Sepsis	Nil.
Other Puerperal Causes	Nil.
TOTAL	Nil.
Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still) Births	0.00

Death Rate all infants per 1,000 live births	54.9
Death Rate Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	53.4
Illegitimate infant deaths	1
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years)	2

Birth Rate

The Birth Rate for 1952, 15.05 per 1,000 of the estimated population shows little change as compared with the previous year. For the period under review the Birth Rate for England and Wales was 15.3

Death Rate

The Death Rate for 1952 shows little change to that of last year being 12.5 for 1952 as compared with 13.8 for 1951. The comparable figure for England and Wales was 11.3.

INFANTILE MORTALITY

15 deaths occurred during the year of infants under one year of age, giving an Infantile Mortality Rate of 54.9. The corresponding rate for 1951 was 34.9,

The Infantile Mortality Rate shows an increase from that of last year, being about twice the figure shown for England and Wales—a most unsatisfactory position.

INFANTILE MORTALITY PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

1942	.....	.....	.....	.....	31.4
1943	.....	.....	.....	.....	68.9
1944	.....	.....	.....	.....	76.2
1945	.....	.....	.....	.....	50.5
1946	.....	.....	.....	.....	24.9
1947	.....	.....	.....	.....	36.6
1948	.....	.....	.....	.....	48.6
1949	.....	.....	.....	.....	58.3
1950	.....	.....	.....	.....	32.08
1951	.....	.....	.....	.....	34.9
1952	.....	.....	.....	.....	54.9

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL PYREXIA AND OTHER PUERPERAL CAUSES

It is very satisfactory to again record no deaths in the area from Puerperal Pyrexia and other Puerperal Causes. This is due to the advent of modern drugs and to the excellent preventative measures now in operation. A modern maternity unit is now available at Dryburn Hospital where confinements are supervised under excellent conditions. Accommodation for Puerperal cases is also made at the Chester-le-Street Isolation Hospital with all the modern drugs available for necessary treatment.

The following table gives the Vital Statistics of the district for 1952 and previous years :—

Year	Estimated Resident Population Mid-year	Births		Deaths		Infantile Mortality Rate
		No.	Crude Rate	No.	Crude Rate	
1942	16,680	287	17.2	192	11.5	31.4
1943	16,470	319	19.4	183	11.1	68.9
1944	16,680	342	20.2	203	18.2	76.2
1945	16,980	317	18.7	223	13.1	50.5
1946	17,820	401	22.5	186	10.4	24.9
1947	17,850	382	21.4	199	11.2	36.6
1948	18,620	329	17.6	201	10.7	48.6
1949	18,620	324	17.4	206	11.06	58.3
1950	18,650	304	16.3	233	12.5	32.08
1951	18,210	286	15.7	251	13.8	34.9
1952	18,140	273	15.05	227	12.5	54.9

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1952

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
All Causes	125	102	227
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	2	2	4
Syphilitic Diseases	1	1	2
Whooping Cough	1	—	1
Other Infective and parasitic diseases	1	1	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	7	2	9
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung Bronchus	5	—	5
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	1	3	4
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	—	4	4
Other Malignant and Lymphatic neoplasm	10	6	16
Leukaemia	1	—	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	17	18	35
Coronary disease, Angina	21	14	35
Hypertension with Heart Disease	2	—	2
Other Heart Disease	16	20	36
Other circulatory disease	4	3	7
Influenza	—	1	1
Pneumonia	6	5	11
Bronchitis	2	4	6
Other diseases of Respiratory system	1	1	2
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	2	1	3
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	1	1	2
Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	—	1
Congenital Malformations	3	4	7
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	13	9	22
All other accidents	4	2	6
Suicide	3	—	3

The following were the chief causes of death during the year :—

<i>Cause of Death</i>	<i>Number of deaths</i>	<i>% of total deaths</i>
1. Diseases of the Heart (Cerebral Haemorrhage and other) (Circulatory Diseases)	115	50.6
2. Cancer	37	16.3
3. Respiratory diseases	20	8.81
4. Violence :— (Road Traffic Accidents) (6 Other Violent Causes) (3 Suicide)	9	3.96
5. Tuberculosis (all forms)	4	1.76

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels combine to be responsible for the major number of deaths in the town. Half of the people who died in 1952, died as a result of disease of the heart or circulatory system.

Cancer occupies second place but only accounts for one third of the number due to heart trouble. Of those due to Cancer 5 of the deaths were due to Cancer of the lung.

BIRTH RATE, DEATH RATE AND ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR

	Rate per 1000 Total Population		Annual Death Rate per 1,000 population								Rate per 1000 Live Births	
	Live Births	Still Births	All Causes	Typhoid & Paratyphoid Fever	Diphtheria	Tuberculosis	Whooping Cough	Pneumonia	Influenza	Acute Poliomyel- itis including Poli- oencephalitis	Diarrhoea & Enteritis under one year of age	Total Deaths under one year
ENGLAND AND WALES	15.3	0.35	11.3	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.42	0.04	0.01	1.1	27.6
160 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London	16.9	0.43	12.1	0.00	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.52	0.04	0.01	1.3	31.2
160 smaller towns est. resident population, 25,000 to 50,000 1951 Census	15.5	0.36	11.2	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.00	0.43	0.04	0.00	0.5	25.8
LONDON	17.6	0.34	12.6	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.58	0.05	0.01	0.7	23.8
CHESTER-LE-STREET	15.05	0.27	12.5	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.05	0.60	0.05	0.00	0.11	54.9

NURSING IN THE HOME

Home Nursing.

The County Council provides two nurses in Chester-le-Street for general district work, there is also a nurse at Pelton Fell and one at Chester Moor. Any requests for the services of these nurses should be made to the nurses themselves or to the superintendent of the County Nursing Association, Hallgarth House, Durham. Tel. No. Durham 1640, Extension 4.

Domiciliary Midwifery Service.

There are five certified midwives practising in the area. These are subject to the supervision of the Inspector of Midwives of the Durham County Council. Names and addresses of these midwives can be obtained from the Child Welfare Centre or from Medical Practitioners.

Domestic Help.

In case of sickness, childbirth or other household emergencies, domestic helps are provided on request to the Durham County Council. A charge is made for the service in accordance with income scales. Application should be made through the district health visitor or the County Medical Officer, Health Department, Shire Hall, Durham. Tel. No. Durham 1616.

Health Visitors.

This service is maintained by the Durham County Council and is the connecting link between the home and the health activities of the County Council. During the year 26 reports were received by the health department from the County health visitor. These reports are helpful to the department and relate chiefly to Tuberculosis but in some instances refer to sanitary defects, overcrowding, changes of addresses, and disinfection of infected premises.

LABORATORY FACILITIES FOR THE EXAMINATION OF BACTERIOLOGICAL SPECIMENS

The following are particulars of examinations undertaken during 1952 at the Central Public Health Laboratory, Government Buildings, Ponteland Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Diphtheria	—	4
Tuberculosis	36	155
Miscellaneous	—	10

DIPHTHERIA PROPHYLAXIS

The responsibility for the provision of facilities for Diphtheria Immunisation continues to be that of the Local Health Authority i.e. the DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL. Immunisation of children under five years of age is carried out at the Welfare Centre, West Lane, Chester-le-Street and for children of school age facilities are provided by the General Practitioners in the district by arrangement with the Local Health Authority.

Number of children (0-15) years who have completed a course of immunisation at any time up to 31.12.52.

Age at 31.12.52	<i>Under</i> 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Born in year	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945
Number immunised	19	156	147	173	201	259	247	197
Age at 31.12.52	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Born in year	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	
Number immunised	266	182	106	144	135	154	149	2535

In this area the number of children (ages 0—15 years) who have received a full course of immunisation at any time from 1941—52 was 2,535.

During the year 1952, 241 children (ages 0—15 years) received a full course of immunisation and 147 received booster doses.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES	AT AGES—YEARS							January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total No. notified	Removed to hospital
	Under 1	1 to 5	6 to 15	16 to 25	26 to 45	46 to 65	66 up														
Paratyphoid B. Fever	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	1
Ophthalmia	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	2
Pneumonia	6	4	2	—	3	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	—	1	2	—	—	3	2	17	10
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Scarlet Fever	—	23	11	—	—	—	—	—	3	4	7	5	1	3	2	3	4	1	1	34	34
Whooping Cough	8	24	2	—	—	—	—	11	7	1	2	7	—	1	1	—	—	4	—	34	10
Measles	3	136	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	26	45	40	2	10	10	46	181	1
Diagnosis not confirmed	1	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	5	5
TOTALS	20	190	58	1	5	1	2	13	13	10	10	15	27	50	47	7	15	19	51	277	65

TUBERCULOSIS

Notifications and deaths occurring in the Urban district during the past five years :—

Year	Pulmonary Tuberculosis		Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	
	Notifications	Deaths	Notifications	Deaths
1948	9	5	3	3
1949	23	6	3	—
1950	15	8	5	2
1951	15	8	5	1
1952	12	4	3	—

Tuberculosis—Table showing sex and age distribution of new cases and mortality during the year.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—4 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—14 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—24 years.....	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—
25—44 years.....	3	3	—	—	1	—	—	—
45—64 years.....	3	—	1	—	1	2	—	—
65—74 years.....	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
75 and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	8	4	2	1	2	2	—	—

Total number cases transferred into the area 7
Total number cases transferred out of the area 3
No. of patients removed from register (Non-Tuberculous) 5

Infectious Disease Notifications since 1942

<i>Disease</i>	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Cerebro Spinal Fever	2	—	—	—	1	4	2	—	—	2	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	68	68	22	20	17	21	56	51	21	11	34
Diphtheria	37	20	21	26	25	6	3	1	—	—	—
Enteric Fever (Including Paratyphoid)	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	1	—	2	1
Pneumonia	37	28	36	16	15	17	15	14	25	26	17
Erysipelas	7	11	5	—	2	3	2	2	4	—	2
Opthalmia Neonatorum	2	5	2	1	2	—	1	1	—	—	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	4	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	1	—
Whooping Cough	20	5	5	4	13	3	21	4	12	16	34
Measles	195	112	39	110	29	224	227	90	193	107	181
Food Poisoning	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	1	1	5	—	—	2	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	8	14	17	14	15	10	9	23	15	15	12
Tuberculosis (Non-Pulmonary)	8	15	6	12	3	5	3	3	5	5	3

COUNCIL OFFICES,

CHESTER-LE-STREET.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the 29th year I have had the honour to submit a report as Sanitary & Housing Inspector. Although, during the period under review considerable effort has been made to cover every field of public health within the province of the Sanitary Inspector, the greatest activity has been directed to the sphere of housing which continues to be an urgent problem not only locally but nationally.

During the war years housing activities were chiefly confined to the repair of homes damaged by enemy action, and as a consequence the building of new houses is only now approaching adequate numbers necessary to meet the accumulated demands of many years. The shortage of materials was also responsible for the delay in effecting repairs to existing properties, which have in some cases further deteriorated as a result. Unfortunately it has been the experience of your Officer to meet with property owners who still refer to the supposed scarcity of materials as an excuse for avoiding the repairing of dwelling houses.

The scarcity and increasing cost of building materials has inevitably called for increased ingenuity and a departure from traditional methods. Thus there has been some experimenting with plastic domestic cold water service pipes, the substitution of asbestos and aluminium for heavy iron gutters and downcomers, and a further innovation is the substitution of reinforced concrete joists in place of the hitherto solely recognised timber variety. As in other parts of the country the national problem of solving the housing situation is likely to remain for some years yet, but in numbers, type, variety and stability it would be difficult to find better houses than those erected in the Chester-le-Street Urban area.

Passing reference may be made to the continued absence of water-borne diseases, and the increased concentration on food hygiene. It is considered that there is still an urgent need for legislation to prevent persons smoking when preparing and serving foodstuffs, which does not come within the meaning of existing byelaws, and the registration of all food shops may well be worthy of the attention of the Ministry of Food.

As mentioned in the report of 1951, there is still no legal standard of cleanliness for Ice Cream and the inclusion of lollipops (although only coloured syrup and frozen water) within the scope of Ice Cream registration is now a pressing necessity.

With the exception of one factory there have been no serious smoke nuisances during the year under report, and several changes in the boiler apparatus etc., have been effected as a result of these activities.

Factories and workshops continue to receive attention, and some improvements have again been effected. Collaboration with H.M. Factory Inspector is maintained and has resulted in solving some difficulties in the sphere of responsibilities.

Rodent control continues to receive attention but no serious infestations have been revealed. New and more effective vermin destroyers are constantly being evolved, and as a result the rodent control is not the perplexing problem of ten years ago.

Although a considerable amount of the work of supervision and control of Milk production is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Food, and the County Council, there is still a considerable field of activity for the Local Authority in these important duties.

There have only been a few caravans of the gypsy type in the area during the year 1952, and these were soon removed. The barracade erected by the Council at the Burn Greens has prevented many of these vehicles being parked on the waste land adjacent to the Burn Greens, a favourite camping ground for nomads in past years.

As in previous years the abatement of nuisances received constant attention, and although some of these are seemingly unimportant, are nevertheless regarded as a tangible contribution to public health generally.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE C. BANKS,
Sanitary and Housing Inspector.

Water Supplies.

The public water supply is provided by the Durham County Water Board, and the chief catchment area is at Burnhope where there is a large reservoir which was completed about 1936. There is in addition a sister reservoir at Waskerley (which is the largest in the County) and also two smaller subsidiary reservoirs.

There was some danger of a water shortage last year and an appeal was made by the Durham County Water Board for economy as the reservoirs at Smiddy Shaw and Hisehope were almost empty. It was fortunate that there was no scarcity of water locally, but industrial concerns in some parts of the County were restricted in the available water supplies.

It is pleasing to note that all the 8 samples of water taken in various parts of the area during 1952 proved satisfactory and were in fact entirely negative.

As there have been considerable opencast mining operations and extensive building works carried out in the district, the possibility of some damage to the water network is not impossible and should be anticipated under the circumstances. The agitation of sediment in hitherto quiet sections of the water mains network may in some cases cause some cloudiness and discolouration. The same may be said to apply to the absorption of vegetable and peat matter at high levels in the catchment area during the stormy weather, but

we were assured on the reliable authority of the Public Health Laboratory staff that these suspended matters are not to be regarded as dangerous contamination.

The Durham County Water Board are expending vast sums of money in effecting repairs and renewals to the water system throughout the county, and extensive new projects which are to be expected to last over a number of years are now being planned. The new 12-in. heavy metal pipe line from the Stanley area which is providing a new subsidiary feed to the South Pelaw tank is operating satisfactorily. It will be remembered that this new main was completed after many difficulties a few years ago.

There are no domestic water supplies dependent on wells in the Urban area, the last being the "Kennels", which is now being demolished.

MEAT INSPECTION

Ministry of Food Slaughtering Centre.

The position with regard to slaughtering facilities are the same as in 1951, namely 4 slaughterhouses, three of which are licenced, and are all privately owned.

The Ministry of Food have taken over the slaughtering premises of the Chester-le-Street Co-operative Society on a lengthy lease and the whole of the lairs and slaughterhouse are vested in the Ministry of Food. Animals are slaughtered and carcasses inspected for both the Chester-le-Street Urban and Rural districts.

Foot and Mouth diseases have been prevalent in the North of England for varying periods but there are no movement restrictions operating locally at the time of completing this report.

Much attention is directed to the inspection of live animals particularly those sent in for slaughter as *casuals*. These new recommendations are implemented as far as is possible and in some cases afford valuable evidence regarding the general condition of the animal for food purposes.

During December, 1952 there were outbreaks of Fowl pest in 40 Counties in which 211 cases were notified and there are further cases reported in adjacent counties at the time of compiling this report (1953). This is a condition which calls for close inspection of animals killed for the table but apart from the inflammatory intestinal conditions and extreme emaciation in advanced cases dressed poultry affected with this disease is difficult to detect when exposed for sale in shops and markets.

There are Ministry of Food Slaughtering Centres in the following Towns in the County :—Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Consett, Darlington, Houghton-le-Spring, Sunderland, South Shields, Stockton, West Hartlepool and Easington R.D. At the foregoing centres all animals slaughtered and meat examined is vested in the Ministry of Food, and meat is distributed to the whole of the population of the County. In addition, suspected animals are sent in by the Inspectors of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for post-mortem examination under the Tuberculosis Order 1938.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned

	<i>Cattle exclud- ing Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number Inspected	430	90	24	2,750	155
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis</i>					
Whole carcases condemned	1	2	—	2	12
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	65	20	—	46	12
Percentage of the number inspected affected with dis- ease other than tuberculosis	15.35%	24.44%	—	1.74%	9.03%
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcases condemned	—	3	—	—	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	46	12	—	—	10
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	10.69%	16.66%	—	—	7.74%

Unsound and Diseased Meat Condemned (1952 Statistics).

	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>
January		4½	11
February		1	43
March		3½	14
April		7¾	1
May	14		16
June	2		1
July	2½		6
August	3½		0
September	7½		0
October	8½		24
November	4½		32
December	1		26
TOTAL	3	1¾	6

Ministry of Food Slaughtering Centre.

As stated in previous Annual Reports, the Ministry of Food Slaughtering Centre is in many ways unsatisfactory and obsolete. The facilities for inspection when slaughtering is at peak levels are quite inadequate and the arrangements for the isolation of suspected animals are non-existent. A new high pressure hot water unit has been recently installed and a new vat for pig scalding has been provided. The premises have been painted and white-washed and the electric fan cooling system has been improved.

Cattle Sheep and pigs etc. slaughtered locally are distributed in both the Urban and adjacent Rural areas, and include animals sent in as casualties by Farmers, Veterinary Surgeons and Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

There have been no cases of Anthrax, Swine Fever or Foot and Mouth Disease revealed during the period under report, but there have been some local restrictions as a result of the latter disease being prevalent in neighbouring Counties.

It is possible to report a decrease in the quantity condemned compared with the year 1951. These figures are liable to vary from time to time in ratio to the number of casualties sent in from other areas, and therefore do not necessarily reflect local conditions.

All meat condemned was removed by the staff of the Ministry of Food for purposes other than human consumption.

Canned Foodstuffs Destroyed.

Having in view the urgent necessity for conserving and saving foodstuffs, there is considerable satisfaction in reporting a considerable reduction in the quantity of canned and other foodstuffs condemned during the year under review. The amount being 1 ton, 9 cwt. 48 lbs. compared with 2 tons, 22 lbs. in 1951. It was again necessary to condemn a considerable amount of canned cooked ham of foreign origin. The canned goods in question come chiefly from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Holland and Poland, the most frequent causes for unsoundness being :—

- (a) Undercooking
- (b) Tin plate too thin or inadequately tinned
- (c) Mild curing
- (d) Penetration by nails.

In some instances the middle of the meat was found to be raw and sour and in others the amount of moisture retained in the meat tended to early putrefaction. The tins were in some instances

so thin as to be capable of being crushed by hand pressure, and so flimsy as to encourage rapid rusting. The public demand for mild cured ham reduced the quantity and preservative quality of hams consumed locally. It is deplorable that so much excellent food should be destroyed and there is an overwhelming case for the encouragement of home production and thus reduce the necessity for the extensive importation of foodstuffs.

Slaughter of Animals Act 1933.

Slaughter of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1951.

The object of the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933 is chiefly directed to the obligatory stunning animals for slaughter with humane killers (mechanical instruments) and the compulsory registration of Slaughtermen engaged in killing cattle, sheep and pigs. It is now regarded as important that all slaughtermen should be required to be licenced as the tendency to engage unlicenced persons is becoming more apparent. This is sometimes difficult to detect when Inspectors are frequently engaged on other work in addition to slaughterhouse duties. At present there are 17 persons licenced to slaughter under the above-mentioned legislation and there were 2 renewals during the period under report. The Slaughter of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1951 imposes on slaughter house staff to ensure an adequate supply of food and water for cattle etc. awaiting slaughter. New legislation is now being considered by Parliament (June 1953) which will further affect and amend the legislation with special reference to the slaughtering of pigs in country districts.

Milk Supplies.

The legislation covering milk supplies tends to become extensive and complicated. The control of milk production on farms continues to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, however the planning of the buildings, the drainage and water supplies of farms remain within the scope of the local authority. It is again necessary to report the unsatisfactory drainage system at Garden House Farm. Local authorities are responsible for the granting of licences to dealers, distributors and dairies, and these important powers should be fully recognised by the Council. It would be helpful if the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries etc., would furnish the local authority with particulars of inspections made and improvements effected as the local authority may reasonably be concerned regarding the farms in the area.

Acts and Regulations in Force.

- (1) The Milk (Special) Designations Act, 1949
- (2) The Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949

- (3) The Milk (Special Designations) (Pasteurised and Sterilised) Regulations, 1949
- (4) The Milk (Special Designations) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Licences Issued.

Supplementary Licences to retail Pasteurised Milk	6
Licences to retail Tuberculin Tested Pasteurised Milk	5
Licences to retail Sterilised Milk	13
Dealers licence to retail Accredited Milk	1
Licences to retail Tuberculin Tested Raw Milk	1

It is satisfactory to note that of the 8 samples of milk comprising 7 samples of Tuberculin Tested Pasteurised Milk and 1 Tuberculin Tested Raw Milk all conformed the phosphatase test and were also found to be free from Tubercle bacilli. Two complaints of dirty milk bottles were referred to the manager of the Pasteurising plant concerned and an improvement effected.

Ice Cream.

There were 6 samples of ice cream submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination for cleanliness with the following results :—

<i>No. of Samples</i>	<i>Result.</i>
3	Grade 1.
1	Grade 2.
2	Grade 4.

Unfortunately there is still no statutory standard for ice cream cleanliness, the grading standards being entirely provisional and with no legal effect it being no offence to retail the grade 4 variety. It is becoming increasingly obvious that demands are increasing to ensure that a definite satisfactory standard should soon be forthcoming. Equally pressing is the inclusion of Ice Lollipops (although only frozen water and coloured syrup) within the meaning of the Food and Drugs Act or similar controlling legislation. The tendency on the part of some retailers to presume that Ice Cream should be brought into the category of lollipops is regarded as a detriment to high food standards.

There is now (1953) legislation requiring a certain food standard and sampling in this connection is a matter for the Food and Drugs sampling Officers of the County Weights and Measures Dept. It is reasonable to assume that all food sampling activities is a matter for the health departments of all local authorities who have officers especially trained for this important work.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948

PART I OF THE ACT.

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of			M/c line No. (7)
			Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities†	1	—	—	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	55	110	6	—	2
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority‡ (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	2	8	—	—	3
TOTAL		57	118	6	—	—

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more "cases")

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	No. of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (7)	M/c line No. (8)
		Found (3)	Remedied (4)	To H.M. Inspector (5)	Referred By H.M. Inspector (6)		
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	4	1	1	—	—	—	4
Overcrowding (S.2)	5	—	—	—	—	—	5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	6	—	—	—	—	—	6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	7	—	—	—	—	—	7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	8	—	—	—	—	—	8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)							
(a) Insufficient	9	—	—	—	—	—	9
(b) Unsuitable or defective	10	5	5	—	—	—	10
(c) Not separate for sexes	11	—	—	—	—	—	11
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	12	—	—	—	—	—	12
TOTAL	60	6	6	—	—	—	60

*e.g. Metropolitan Borough, County Borough, Borough, Urban District, Rural District.

† To prevent any differences between the lists kept respectively by the Local Authorities and H.M. Inspectors of Factories and the numbers of factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Factories Acts, 1937, are enforced by Local Authorities, it is requested that Local Authorities should compare their lists of factories with the lists kept by H.M. Inspectors of Factories.

‡ i.e. Electrical Stations (Sections 103(1)), Institutions (Section 104) and sites of Building Operations and Works of Engineering Construction (Sections 107 and 108).

CONVERSIONS.

There was considerable advancement in the matter of conversions carried out in 1952. The number of ash-closets converted into water-closets being 124 compared with 48 such alterations carried out in 1951. Of the number mentioned 20 were done by the British Railways at Alma Cottages, Pelton Fell, 16 were converted by this Council at Mission Row, Newfield and 11 at South View, Newfield.

The Council continues to make a £5 grant towards the cost of conversions but in view of the rapid increase in the cost of building materials this contribution is regarded by some as inadequate, but it is contended by your Inspector that many property owners should, with the rapid improvement in housing standards, have carried out these conversions years ago as a reasonable if not a legal obligation. The elimination of ash-closets is an immediate aim but it is in some respects regarded as inequitable that dilatory property owners should be subsidised to carry out work to private property which should have been regarded as a normal responsibility on the part of those owning the houses.

Ashclosets—Number of ashclosets remaining in each ward :—

<i>North Ward</i>	<i>South Ward</i>	<i>Central Ward</i>	<i>West Ward</i>	<i>Pelton Fell Ward</i>	<i>Chester Moor Ward</i>
53	96	38	6	88	3

At the end of December, 1952 there were 284 ash-closets in the Urban Area but it is fully expected from the interest exhibited in various quarters that progress will be maintained in this essential public health work.

RODENT CONTROL.

There is a constantly changing technique employed in connection with Rodent Control and the more recent of these methods are Warfarin, Soressa and the use of Rodenticidal dusts containing anticoagulants. The lethal effect of the latter being dependent on rodents absorbing the dust laid in runways as a result of licking the dust during cleaning process. These poisons have the important advantage of being non-injurious to man and animal. They are by their chemical composition far less dangerous than phosphorus and arsenical preparations and are therefore in popular demand for rat and mouse extermination. Further experiments are now necessary which will produce a Rodenticidal which will induce poisoned rodents to die in the open and thus avoid the objectionable

results of decaying bodies under floors and in wall spaces. As mentioned in previous reports the uncontrolled tipping of house refuse in various parts of the area is undoubtedly attracting vermin to the warmth and particles of food which are invariably associated with household refuse. The constant efforts of the rodent operator are therefore directed to these vast dumps.

The sewers and sewage disposal plant also receives frequent treatment but no serious rat infestation has been revealed during the period under report.

The Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse which is also a potential site for rodent infestation receives frequent visits and attention of the rodent control staff of the Infestation Control Division (Rodent Operators) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the new address of the latter being at Government Buildings, Kenton Bar, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. Visits to Food stores and other inquiries reveal no large scale destruction of foodstuffs by rats and mice, and this fact affords every encouragement to those engaged locally in the important work of rat extermination.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

Report for Year ending 31st December, 1952.

Type of Property.					
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agri-cultural	All other (including business premises)	Total
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District	36	5,412	16	572	6,036
II. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority during 1952 as a result of—					
(a) notification.....	—	46	—	—	46
(b) survey or otherwise	36	136	4	44	220
III. Number of properties inspected (see Section II) which were found to be infested by rats					
Major	4	—	—	—	4
Minor	4	26	—	20	50
IV. Number of properties inspected (see Section II) which were found to be seriously infested by mice	—	4	—	1	5
V. Number of infested properties (see Sections III and IV) treated by the Local Authority	20	96	—	20	136
VI. Number of notices served under Section 4 (1) Treatment	—	—	—	—	—
(2) Structural Works (i.e. Proofing)	—	—	—	1	1
VII. Number of cases in which default action taken by L.A.	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	100	5,720	20	658	6,498

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1952.

	<i>Number of Informal written Notices by Inspector</i>	<i>Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority</i>	<i>Number of Nuisances abated after Notice</i>
1.—PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.			
Dwelling-houses and Schools			
Foul Conditions.....	—	—	—
Structural Defects	68	3	65
Overcrowding	—	—	—
Lodging-houses	—	—	—
Dairies and Milkshops	2	—	2
Cowsheads	—	—	—
Bakehouses	4	—	4
Slaughter-houses	—	—	—
Ashpits and Privies	64	—	64
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	3	—	3
Waterclosets	25	—	25
Defective Yard Paving	20	—	20
House Drainage			
Defective Traps.....	1	—	1
No Disconnection from Sewers	—	—	—
Other Faults	16	—	16
Water Supply	5	—	5
Pigsties	2	—	2
Animals Improperly Kept	—	—	—
Offensive Trades	—	—	—
Smoke Nuisances	1	—	1
Other Nuisances	—	—	—
TOTALS	210	3	207
2.—WATER, FOOD AND DRUGS.			
Samples of Water taken for Analysis			8
Samples condemned as unfit for use			—
Voluntary Seizures of Unwholesome Food			500
Convictions for exposing or selling			—
Unwholesome Food			—
Samples of Food & Drugs taken for Analysis			10
Samples found Adulterated			—
3.—PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.			
Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed			—
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease			36
Schools disinfected after Infectious Disease			2
Prosecutions for exposures of infected persons or things			—
Convictions for exposures of infected persons or things			—
4.—GENERAL.			
Number of New Houses erected during year			105
Number of such Houses occupied during Year			105
Ashpit-privies converted into Ash-closets			—
Ashpit-privies converted into Water-closets			—
Ash-closets converted into Water-closets			105
Total number of Water-closets in District			5,153
Total number of Ash-closets in District.....			284
Total number of Ash-pit privies in District			—

Scavenging & Refuse Disposal.

The recognised methods of refuse collection and disposal vary in different parts of the country and are invariably dependent on local circumstances and conditions. The scientific controlling of refuse disposal is becoming a matter of momentous concern as available tipping sites diminish in proportion to the development of building sites and the conserving of agricultural land. The scarcity of waste land for the disposal of household refuse is daily becoming apparent throughout the country and it may well soon be true to say that there is no such thing as waste land, all being reserved for building or the production of crops.

Locally, refuse collection is effected by 4 covered Fordson lorries and 2 horse-drawn vehicles. There is some possibility of one of the latter being dispensed with this year. House refuse is tipped on the following tipping sites :—

- (1) Red Rose Tip at the South end of the Town.
- (2) The Buckles adjacent to the Sewage Disposal Works.

The tipping site at Pelton Fell has been claimed by the National Coal Board who own the land in question.

As mentioned in several previous annual reports the uncontrolled dumping of house refuse on open ground is an unsatisfactory practice as the same is unsanitary and affords a breeding ground for flies and vermin.

As already indicated the number of tipping sites have been considerably reduced and the introduction of regional refuse destructors or a system of sea dumping in the coastal areas may well prove worthy of consideration.

With the progressive reduction in the number of ash-closets in the district there should be some saving in the time and labour spent in refuse collection.

Public cleansing officers are showing a decided interest in the new type of small capacity low chassis refuse collecting lorries suitable for modern tipping and for operating in narrow back streets. These mean less lifting and petrol consumption and are becoming popular in those districts adapted to this type of vehicle.

Smoke Abatement.

The general fallacy that Industry is responsible for smoke nuisance and the precipitation of grit and dust is being exploded, and it is becoming increasingly obvious that there is a close relationship between atmosphere pollution and the domestic grate. Proof

is daily forthcoming that inferior fuel may also be responsible in Industry where an accusing finger is too readily pointed at indifferent mechanical feeding, unequal loading, and secondary combustion weakness. District heating was once considered to be the solution to domestic pollution but for various reasons this system has not been fully developed. Smoke abatement and certainly smoke elimination will not be easily attained in a country where coal is largely used for industry and domestic consumption, but the increasing use of gas and electricity for these purposes presents the only complete answer to the smoke problem.

The supreme factor which appears to be constantly ignored lies in the fact that smoke abatement as at present visualised does not necessarily mean the elimination of grit and combustion gases which are regarded as the chief menace to health.

Locally, smoke nuisance is not extensive by reason of the fact that machinery at most of the collieries and factories is operated by electricity.

Several visits were made to a local factory and one notice was served in connection with smoke abatement. The causes were attributed to inferior fuel, of which 20 tons were stated to be discarded, also the mechanical feeders requiring renewal and the scarcity of trained stokers. Some improvement has been effected at these premises.

Food Hygiene.

There are possibly few aspects of public health activities which have aroused more public interest than the need of greater precautions in the preparation and handling of foodstuffs, but the general public always ready to attribute a case of food poisoning as a matter for the "Council" too frequently overlook or ignore the fact that they can make a valuable contribution to food hygiene by greater domestic precautions and in refusing to patronise shops where there is laxity in dealing with foodstuffs.

It is reported that there were 1,300 cases of food poisoning throughout the Country during 1952 but there were no cases reported in your area although contacts of a case outside the Urban area were kept under supervision. The Food Ministry's model bye-laws have been adopted and have proved beneficial in encouraging cleaner food methods. It is essential that meat cooked overnight should be rapidly cooked and put in a refrigerator. Regular inspections are maintained of hotels, canteens, restaurants, cafes and food shops to ensure clean habits in food handling but another officer could well be engaged for this important work. There is a

responsibility imposed on the local authority to protect the public from the menace of infected food but an adequate staff is essential for this purpose. Many food shops locally now have refrigerators, and glass counter cases for the display of food-stuffs are becoming increasingly popular. These minimise contamination from both public and staff. With overalls becoming more easily obtainable it is very rare to find a food operative without a protective covering.

Food bye-laws may well be amended to prohibit smoking when handling foodstuffs and it should be made compulsory to exclude dogs from food shops. The same ideals should apply for all food-stuffs as those to protect the milk supplies of the community. The hygiene of milk production is an example worth emulating by all food producers.

During the year under report steady progress has been maintained in increasing washing facilities and in the provision of refrigerators, but it is recognised that the menace of infected foodstuffs calls for unflagging vigilance at all times. This is the constant aim of your Inspector.

Acknowledgments.

It will be agreed that although nothing really spectacular has been achieved during the period under review, steady progress has been consistently maintained. There are none of the outstanding problems which are known to affect many other authorities and Chester-le-Street and the surrounding villages have been the subject of many favourable comments by both British and Foreign visitors. On more than one occasion it has been interesting to hear the candid but flattering comments of people of other lands, and a further proof of the truth of these expressions of appreciation is to be seen in the increasing number of families from neighbouring towns who now live in Chester-le-Street and regard the district as a pleasant residential area.

To the Council and my colleagues I accord my appreciation and humble thanks for all information furnished to me for incorporation in my contribution to this Annual Report.

